

## Parents of teenagers: teach those kids to cook!



Algebra, calculus, history, robotics, coding, chemistry... a whole lot of learning happens at school. Be sure to include some basic kitchen skills on your children's curriculum, too. Developing cooking skills during the teenage years may help to ensure good nutrition and health down the road, says a new study. Researchers looked at data from thousands of people who were surveyed at ages 18 to 23 about their cooking skills and later, when they were 30 to 35, about their cooking and eating habits. In their 30s, those who had rated their cooking skills as "adequate" or "very adequate" as young adults were more likely to prepare meals that included vegetables and eat meals as a family, and less likely to eat fast food, than those who had reported poorer cooking skills. Old-school "home economics" classes, which were often required and included learning how to cook, are a thing of the past, but if cooking classes are offered as electives at your children's school, encourage them to sign up! Or put on your teacher's hat at home. Make cooking dinner a family affair by dividing duties at mealtime (prep cook, sauté chef, salad maker) whenever you all have the time. Throw on some music to add some fun. If you're not great in the kitchen yourself, build your competence and confidence by finding a cooking class in your community, or ask a friend who's cooking you enjoy for help. It's never too late to learn kitchen skills, and regularly preparing meals with whole foods (vegetables, beans, fish, whole grains, olive oil, and spices) is one of the best things you can do for your family's health – and their taste buds!

**The family that cooks together stays healthy together!**